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THE KENTUCKY Kernel

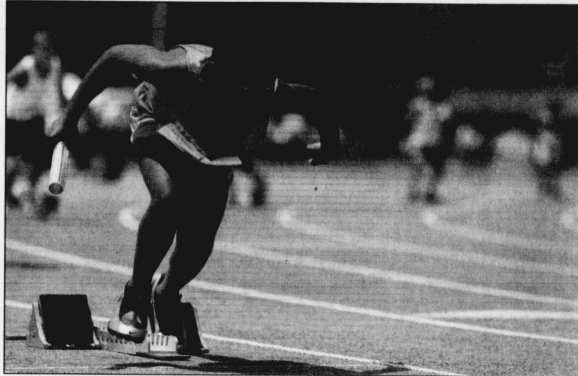
Celebrating 33 years of independence

Christian Slater before 'True
Romance,' and Winona Ryder before
her five-fingered discount days.
See Movies You Missed.
Page 3

On Your Mark



Malick Robinson, 13, of the Dunbar Blazin' Bearcats Track Club, gets set for the first leg of the 4x100 on Sunday afternoon during the Bluegrass State Games.



Robinson steps off the starting line for the first leg of 4x100, Sunday afternoon at the Bluegrass State Games. The Bluegrass State Games are designed for amateur athletes of all ages and skill levels.

Star of 'Seabiscuit' at Kentucky Horse Park

By Sara Hack
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

A movie star is taking a vacation in Lexington this summer.

One of the Thoroughbreds used to portray the legendary racehorse in last year's blockbuster film *Seabiscuit* is staying at the Kentucky Horse Park from May 16 through September.

Many different horses were used to portray *Seabiscuit* in the film, depending on their particular talents.

"*Rich in Dallas*" was used in the scene when *Seabiscuit's* trainer instructed the jockey to let the horse "run 'till he stops."

They went running through the fields and over a stone bridge at Xalapa, a Kentucky Horse Farm.

"*Rich in Dallas*" is on loan to the park from a thoroughbred rescue organization called the Exceller Fund, an organization that works to help save at-risk Thoroughbreds.

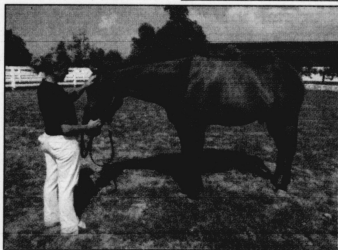
The Kentucky Horse Park had its own *Seabiscuit* star named "I Two Step Too," but the horse was humanely destroyed earlier this year after a battle with

a rare type of tumor.

"While we still grieve the loss of 'I Two Step Too,' we are grateful to the Exceller Fund for generously allowing '*Rich in Dallas*' to spend the summer with us," John Nicholson, executive director of the Kentucky Horse Park said in a earlier press release.

"Literally thousands of park visitors will get to meet and touch a real movie star."

E-mail
news@kykernel.com



Jenna Fox, rider in the Parade of Breeds, gives *Rich in Dallas* a pat on the head before taking him in to the stables from the hot sun.

'Rich in Dallas' Seabiscuit star

Where: The Kentucky Horse Park
4089 Ironworks Pkwy

When: The Park is open 7 days a week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visit "Rich in Dallas" at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. during the Parade of Breeds show.

How Much: Tickets to the Park cost \$14 for adults, \$7 for children 7-12, and children under 6 free.

Study says echinacea useless against colds

By Karen Kaplan
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Echinacea, the popular herbal remedy for fighting the common cold, does not ward off runny noses, sore throats or headaches, nor does it help speed recovery from cold symptoms, according to the results of a broad clinical trial to be reported Thursday in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Taken with other recent studies that showed no benefit from echinacea, the new findings shift the burden of proof to proponents of herbal products to demonstrate that the plant has medicinal value, researchers said.

"We find no evidence that it actually does anything to common cold symptoms," said Dr. Ronald B. Turner, a professor of pediatrics at the University of Virginia School of Medicine and the study's lead author. "If that's the reason you're buying it, then you're wasting your money."

Echinacea enthusiasts said they do not think the results of the study merit such a clear-cut conclusion. They noted that Turner and his colleagues used only the root portion of one version of the plant and said the dosage given was too low to register any positive effect.

"This is a good contribution to the clinical literature, but it's not the definitive study on echinacea," said Mark Blumenthal, executive director of the American Botanical Council, a nonprofit group backed by herbal supplement makers whose logo includes a purple echinacea flower. "I just wish it had been a bigger study with bigger dosages."

Echinacea, a member of the same plant family as sunflowers and daisies, was used for hundreds of years by more than a dozen American Indian tribes to treat

snakebites, toothaches, coughs and other ailments.

Western doctors began recommending it in the 19th century. It became popular in the United States in the 1960s as consumers embraced herbal alternatives to traditional medicine. No less an authority than the World Health Organization recognized echinacea as a treatment for colds in 1999.

Americans spent \$153 million on echinacea products last year, making it one of the five best-selling herbs in the country, according to the *Nutrition Business Journal*, an industry publication based in San Diego. It comes in capsules, tablets, tonics, powders, lozenges, tea bags and even gummy vitamins for children. But spending has been declining steadily since 2001 as some users become disillusioned with the product, said editor Grant Ferrier.

"With a lot of herbal botanicals, including echinacea, there's not a tangible effect," Ferrier said. "It's not like taking a pill for a headache. A lot of it goes on faith."

Widespread consumer faith in echinacea prompted the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, a branch of the National Institutes of Health, to fund the two-year study. The goal was to pinpoint exactly how the herb attacks colds, said Dr. Stephen Straus, the center's director.

Instead, the study concluded the plant served no such role.

"I would wish nothing more than for the echinacea study to be positive, but good science speaks for itself," Straus said.

Turner and his colleagues tested three homemade preparations of echinacea, each designed to track the effect of a spe-

See ECHINACEA on page 2

Camps give children and counselors chance to learn from each other

By Laura Clemmons
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

Imagine a summer camp where each game, field trip, sport or craft is tailored to meet each camper's needs. The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government division of Parks and Recreation puts on two therapeutic recreation fun camps that do just that.

From June 13 to July 22, therapeutic recreation fun camps were held at Castlewood and Woodland Parks. Campers age 5-12 attended Castlewood while older campers age 13-21 attended Woodland.

These TR Fun Camps are designed for all youth and children with disabilities. At first glance, it is hard to tell who is a camper and who is a counselor. At these camps,

it's all about having fun — both campers and counselors can attest to that.

Director of the Woodland camp, Caroline Beck, has been involved with the TR Fun Camps for six years. Beck said campers aren't used to having teachers and counselors who are as patient as the TR Fun Camp counselors are.

"It's cool because, at the beginning of the summer, a lot of the kids will be really introverted and not talk or play much. The goal is to get everyone involved," Beck said.

An average day at camp involves a "morning circle," Beck said, which is when everyone at camp gets to interact together through games or songs. After morning circle, campers split off into groups with a 3-1

camper to counselor ratio. "At camps with typically developing children there is about a 12-1 ratio so a lot of parents are really excited about the attention their child gets at camp," Beck said.

Each day campers participate in four activities that are planned by their counselors. Campers also get to go on field trips, play at a "carnival" and participate in a talent show and mini-Olympics, Beck said.

"The camp teaches independence. A chance to do something without the primary caregiver is very important," said Meg Steinman, parent of a camper and treasurer of the Downs Syndrome Association of Central Kentucky. Steinman said that the camp also offers an opportunity for parents to

share information with other parents. This support system is very important for the parents as well as the campers.

Beth Godbey is director of the Castlewood camp. Godbey said that it is "incredibly important" for camps like the TR Fun Camps to help integrate children with disabilities into society.

"Self-esteem is such a huge issue with any person," Godbey said. "Campers will come in mad, with their defenses up, expecting someone to make fun of them. It may take a couple of weeks but they will start to make friends and realize 'Hey, the counselors and campers know my name, they really like me.'"

It is easy to see a huge change in campers over the

summer, Godbey said. The specialized attention helps the campers to feel less segregated than they may feel at school or other functions. This helps the campers' behavior improve, Godbey said.

"It warms your heart to see that," Steinman said that her daughter, Julia, loves camp at Woodland Park. However, budget cuts have impacted social services, Steinman said. Directors at the TR Fun camps have been paid less in the past than counselors at camps for typically developing children.

"That's not fair," Steinman said. "Steinman would like to see more of a partnership with other agencies so that the children at the TR Fun Camps can have more opportunities. Despite the need for

improvements, Steinman said their family is very satisfied with Julia's camp experience.

The resonating theme with those involved in the Therapeutic Recreation Fun Camps is the importance of socialization. For Steinman, camp offers her daughter experiences that she might not get elsewhere.

"My mom tells me that my greatest achievement is working with these kids," Beck said, "but I don't consider it an achievement at all because it's something I have fun with. I wish it were that way for everybody because I don't understand why anyone would treat these kids differently."

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Echinacea

Continued from page 1

cific extract of the herb. All of the versions were derived from the root of an Echinacea angustifolia plant and contained the equivalent of 300 milligrams of echinacea per dose.

The researchers recruited 437 healthy volunteers and gave them a cold by squeezing droplets of the virus into their noses. Some of the volunteers took echinacea three times a day for one week before being infected. Others started taking it the day they were infected, and one group received a placebo throughout the experiment.

Once infected, the volunteers were sequestered for five days in hotel rooms, where their symptoms were carefully monitored.

Among other things, the volunteers

— mostly college students — endured daily squirts of saltwater up their nostrils. After the water was expelled into cups, researchers cultured the contents to measure the level of different kinds of antibodies.

Volunteers were also asked to keep their used tissues and return them to the researchers, who weighed them to determine whether patients taking echinacea produced less mucus than those on the placebo.

At the end of the study, the researchers could not discern any difference between patients who took any form of echinacea and those who took the placebo.

"None of the preparations we used had any effect on either the rate of infection or the severity of illness," Turner said.

Echinacea advocates insisted the study would have shown an effect if the dosage had been higher.

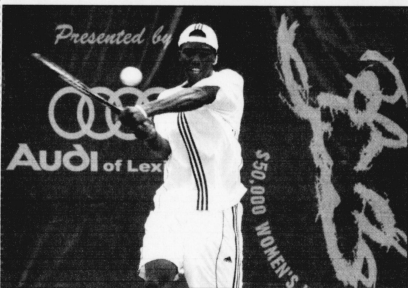
"We do a minimum of 900 milligrams three times a day," said Dr. Mary Jo DiMilia, an assistant clinical

professor of medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital School of Medicine in New York, who describes herself as a satisfied echinacea user and recommends the herb to patients at least 10 times a week. She acknowledged, however, that there are no clinical trials proving echinacea is effective at that dose.

Blumenthal, of the American Botanical Council, said the homemade compounds used in the study "do not correlate directly to any product consumers are using in the marketplace."

It would be inappropriate, he said, to assume the results of this study hold true for products made from different kinds of echinacea plants or that use the flowers and leaves instead of the root.

Turner said his team — which included some echinacea devotees — stayed away from off-the-shelf products because they couldn't know exactly what was in them. The echinacea dosages they used were recommended by a government panel in Germany.



Rik De Voest of Russia (top), defeated Phillip Simmonds of Reston, Va. (bottom) 6-0, 6-7, 7-6 on Wednesday at the USTA Fifth Third Bank Tennis Championships, held at UK's Hilary J. Boone Tennis Center.

New study gives clues to the wanderlust of cancer

By Delthia Ricks
NEWSDAY

Some cancers possess a potentially deadly wanderlust that causes them to spread from one organ to another, and now scientists in Manhattan have unmasked the genes that trigger breast cancers to invade the lungs, according to an analysis that will be released Thursday.

The finding is considered a landmark because it is proof that a specific genetic signature exists for each type of cancer and the organ to which it spreads.

Writing in Thursday's issue of the journal *Nature*, scientists at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center say their finding helps unlock the long-kept secrets of metastasis, the reason cancers become dangerous.

"First and foremost, these findings are about the basic biology of metastasis, and the example we used to investigate it is the metastasis of breast cancer to the lung," said Dr. Gaoray Gupta, one of two lead investigators who teased out the genetic secrets in a study involving a special breed of mice.

The immune-compromised animals were infused with human breast cancer cells from a patient who had widespread metastatic

breast cancer. "Using the (mouse) model, we identified a set of genes that we were able to show mediates this process," he said of cancer straying to a specific site.

"Basically, the genes are largely composed of those that are involved in the communication of tumor cells with the environment they are trying to live in."

In short, there is what Gupta calls "crosstalk" between the cancer and the waiting — and vulnerable — environment of the lung. Think of this devastating communication as a predator sweet-talking its prey into a deadly trap.

Dr. Bruce Zetter, chief scientific officer of Children's Hospital in Boston and one of the nation's leading experts on cancer metastasis, says the study opens a new window of understanding and adds credence to a 115-year-old theory called "seed and soil," which postulated why cancers spread.

"This study is important because it demonstrates that there is a genetic signature that distinguishes metastatic breast cancer cells from nonmetastatic cells. This is something that has been proposed before, but this study shows it in an extremely thoughtful and careful man-

ner," said Zetter, who is also a professor at Harvard Medical School. He was not involved in the Sloan-Kettering research.

"They have found why a breast tumor is not only metastatic, but why it is particularly likely to metastasize to the lungs as opposed to the bone or other sites where breast cancer can spread," Zetter added.

"This is, in fact, an age-old question in cancer research. We always knew that specific tumors went to certain sites, but we didn't know which genes dictated where they went. So it was important to study breast cancer because it doesn't go all over the body, but to specific sites."

Gupta, meanwhile, said knowing the genetic signature of breast cancer's invasive potential to the lungs provides a new target that can help clinicians identify patients whose cancers are likely to invade the lungs — and seed new tumors there.

He said the next step in the study is to better understand the nature of the crosstalk between the tumor and the environment to which it spreads. Knowing details on that process will help doctors treat patients whose cancers are predestined to stray.

The Kernel will return shortly. Until then, it will be on a beach, doing jello shots.

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ONTAP | For the week of July 28 - Aug. 10



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Coldplay will perform at the Riverbend Music Center in Cincinnati on Tuesday, Aug. 9 with Black Mountain.

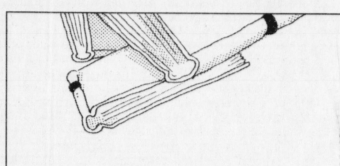
TONIGHT Kenny Loggins US Bank Arena, Cincinnati Tickets cost \$39.50 - \$59.50 8 p.m.	TUESDAY Common Bogarts, Cincinnati Tickets cost \$22 8 p.m.	Dahlia Murder, Arch Enemy, In Flames, and The Haunted Bogarts, Cincinnati Tickets cost \$20 6 p.m.
BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS w/Fatfoot 56 and The Vulturnos The Dame Tickets cost \$5 9 p.m.	WEDNESDAY 3 Doors Down, Breaking Benjamin, Staind, and No Address Riverbend Music Center, Cincinnati Tickets cost \$24.25 to \$60 6:30 p.m.	The Big Tease 2: Modern Burlesque Show Jami Deady w/Panty Raid, Cat's Meow, and Grotesque Burlesque The Dame Tickets cost \$7 9 p.m.
FRIDAY DeNovo Dahl w/The Scourge of the Sea and Emily Hagihara The Dame Tickets cost \$5 9 p.m.	Mandorico The Dame Tickets cost \$5 9 p.m.	SATURDAY The Big Tease 2: Modern Burlesque Show Cat's Meow w/Jami Deady and Grotesque Burlesque The Dame Tickets cost \$7 9 p.m.
SATURDAY Tim McGraw, Billy Dean, and Trick Pony Kentucky Speedway, Sparta Tickets cost \$40-\$75 4 p.m.	Hot Tuna Southgate House, Newport Tickets cost \$16 8 p.m.	MONDAY Matisyahu Bogarts, Cincinnati Tickets cost \$15 8 p.m.
Nate FX Presents a Myspace.com meet up event DJ Heather w/Sponu Scalem, Tryppamine, Trevor Lamont, and The Lady Foursquare The Dame Tickets cost \$5 8 p.m.	THURSDAY Gwar w/Suplecs Headliners, Louisville Tickets cost \$15 7:45 p.m.	TUESDAY Coldplay w/ Black Mountain Riverbend Music Center Tickets cost \$34.25 - \$70 7:30 p.m.
SUNDAY Bowling for Soup Madison Theatre, Covington Tickets cost \$14 7 p.m.	Killswitch Engage, As I Lay Dying, and Soilwork Jillians, Louisville Tickets cost \$17.50 7 p.m.	WEDNESDAY Sexual Disaster Quartet The Dame Tickets cost \$5 8 p.m.
MONDAY Bruce Springsteen US Bank Arena, Cincinnati Tickets cost \$78-\$88 7:30 p.m.	Ricky Baldwin Benefit Metropolitan Blues Allstars w/The Swells, The Yonders, Gypsy Jazz, The Blue Dawg, and Ed McLanahan The Dame Tickets cost \$10 7 p.m.	COMPILED BY FEATURES CO-EDITOR RYAN EBELHAR
Rob Zombie w/Mastadon Bogarts, Cincinnati Tickets cost \$30	FRIDAY Shadows Fall, The Black	

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MOVIES YOU MISSED | Go rent them

By Tiffany Stephens
THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

The '80s: a time of leg-warmers, big hair, androgynous singers and the best damn teen movies ever!

In the spirit of *The Breakfast Club* and *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, I've selected an oft-ignored comedy featuring all the right elements for the best teen movie: snobby girls that rule the school, drama, geeks, love, the rebellious new kid, conformity and murder.

Although you never saw a death-by-poisoning in *The Breakfast Club* (you know you wanted to kill that wacky broad who shook all the dandruff out of her hair), *Heathers*, directed by Michael Lehmann, manages to remain a laugh-fest by making satire out of serious subject matter, including suicide and murder.

The twisted story begins with Veronica Sawyer (Winona Ryder), a beautiful, but cynical teen who wants to be apart of the "in-crowd", although she cannot stand the popular girls, all three named Heather.

The Heathers (played by Lisanne Falk, Kim Walker, and the deliciously evil Shannen Doherty) are the epitome of snobby, rich, bitchy bitches who get their jollies from making fun of a fat girl they dubbed "Dumptruck" and making everyone who differs from them feel inferior.

One of the best parts of the film is its emphasis on conformity and the fear of standing out of a crowd.

Veronica's three adversaries, who embody all that is conformity, dress alike, talk alike and all come from money. There is no room for individuality in the house of Heathers.

Although Veronica loathes the idea of being friends with the Heathers (which is vehemently expressed in her comedic

"Dear Diary" entries throughout the film), she also can't stand the idea of being a social reject, until she meets the elusive new kid in town, Jason Dean (Christian Slater, who else?).

Jason, who seems harmless enough at first, allows Veronica to open up and vent her frustrations about her "friends".

Later in the plot, it becomes quite obvious that JD isn't quite right in the head.

He becomes hell-bent on taking murderous revenge out against the Heathers for, well, simply being bitches.

He starts with the head honcho, Heather Chandler.

Veronica (who remains adorably clueless and naive throughout the film) and Jason try to cover their trails with a fake suicide note, which leads to turmoil and controversy in school.

The Heathers clan is shaken up without their leader, but the remaining Heathers see this as an opportunity to claim the top spot in the group.

With each death (yes, there is more than one), Veronica becomes more and more sickened by the behavior of the Heathers.

The Heathers appear to be emotionally untouched by the death of a friend. Instead, they see the "empty seat" as an opportunity to move up in the in-crowd.

The best Heather by far, is played by Shannen Doherty. She appears to be the underdog of the in-crowd, taking orders and criticisms from Heather Chandler, appearing to be weak and submissive.

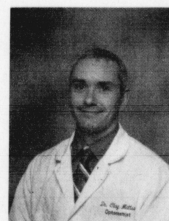
As the plot turns, though, she "biosoms" into the perfect, evil nemesis for Veronica, 10 times worse than anything Heather Chandler could even dream of.

Shannen Doherty, the most evil and cruel person in a teen comedy? Who could've seen that coming?

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IN OUR OPINION

Reading service needed more notice before shutdown

For the past 15 years, the blind population of the region has depended on Central Kentucky Radio Eye as an outlet for daily news and current events.

But in less than three months, the radio reading service housed on UK's campus will be forced to cease operations if a new home is not found.

That's because two weeks ago, after a decade and a half of free rent and utilities from UK, the university told the non-profit organization it would be forced to take back the program's offices in M.L. King Library due to growth in enrollment, research and academic programs.

While property on campus is becoming more and more important to the university due to the recent unprecedented growth, UK could have given more notice to this integral program, ensuring that Central

Kentucky Radio Eye could continue to serve news consumers of the region.

Founded by UK professor Al Crabb in 1990, the radio reading service has grown to provide about 1,500 visually impaired Central Kentuckians with daily stories from local publications such as the Lexington Herald-Leader and the Courier Journal, as well as national news and entertainment magazines.

The services this organization provides to locals with disabilities are essential to the continued education of all that receive them, and the cessation of the program would be devastating to the blind community of Central Kentucky.

But, if new office space is not found, the end of this program could be imminent.

That's where the university comes in.

After 15 years of giving Central Kentucky Radio Eye a place to grow and prosper, it's now up to UK to do the volunteer and recipients of the program one last favor: find it a permanent home.

With an annual working budget of only \$35,000, there's no possible way the organization can continue to serve the community if it is forced to pay non-operation costs.

"If we had to pay rent and utilities, we could not stay in business," the service's volunteer executive director Margaret Chase told the Herald-Leader last week. "The university has provided us with this wonderful support. I had no indication this was coming."

Although UK could have told the reading service further in advance of its impending eviction, university officials have vowed to do whatever they can to

assist Central Kentucky Radio Eye in its search for a new home.

Interim Provost Scott Smith acknowledged last week that UK had no timetable for the transition, but said the university will begin working "immediately" with the service to ensure all of its needs are met in the future.

"It was always our intent — and it remains our intent — to continue helping this important organization maintain its mission and service," Smith said. Smith and other UK officials must follow up on this promise.

Because for the last 15 years this has been more than just a simple service for so many people — it has been an outlet to the region and the world.

And that's something that cannot be replaced.

ONLINE POLL QUESTION

Do you plan to watch the confirmation hearings of U.S. Supreme Court nominee John G. Roberts Jr.?

Yes

No

VOTE ONLINE AT
WWW.KYKERNEL.COM

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Do you approve of President Bush's decision to nominate John G. Roberts Jr. to the U.S. Supreme Court?

Yes

No

69%, 52 votes

31%, 23 votes

Good journalists needed now more than ever

Years ago, when I'd think of journalism, I'd think of dogs.

This thinking was due to a prized relic I have preserved from my high school era. The relic is a large, circular, faux-gold medal, and has the word JOURNALISM printed on it in bold, black letters. It was awarded to my newspaper journalism class by our teacher, Mr. Loocon.

"They were supposed to be keychains," he told us, muttering curses through his thick, woolly beard.

Too unwieldy for use as a key chain, the class speculated better applications for the gigantic disc: paperweight, pendant, ninja throwing star, etc.

Yet I did not see a weapon of death, or the nucleus for a bizarre fashion statement. Instead, I saw this gaudy medal around the neck of a husky, an animal noble enough for such a noble profession (and also because a shi-tzu would easily collapse under the weight of this thing).

But lo these few years later, I'm beginning to think that journalism isn't even fit for dogs. Naming man's best friend after a profession that rewards hacks and liars, that routinely buckles under government pressure, that produces "talent" like Rush Limbaugh and Ann Coulter, would clearly be an insult to an animal that habitually eats its own feces.

Unless, of course, the animal in question is a purebred swine. Or a gutter snake. Or, perhaps, some mutant strain of African dung beetle that lacks functioning reproductive organs. That I could definitely get behind.

And in a time when all three branches of our government are in the hands of conservative Republicans (a likely Roberts confirmation pending), we rely more than ever on that venerable Fourth Estate — the free press — to keep an eye on things for us, to make sure that those in power don't abuse it.

Yet when the media gives us minute-by-minute coverage of the Michael Jackson trial but takes a whole month to

even mention the Downing Street memo, clearly, something is really, really wrong here.

This is all journalism 101 stuff, I know, but that doesn't make it any less true. Our press is terminally ill, like an aging relative with Alzheimer's: eventually they forget how to take care of themselves, only in the press' case there is no one there to wipe the drool from their foaming, jabbering mouth.

Compounding the situation is the fact that media outlets are controlled by a forever-dwindling number of multinational conglomerates, making it harder and harder for dissenting voices to be heard above the corporate cacophony. (God bless you, Rupert Murdoch)

And the Iraq war? More than likely an indirect result from a press so timid, so utterly spineless, that they wrote the president a blank-post-9/11-check instead of doing their jobs. After all, asking hard questions is hard, so why should reporters bother to report?

With reporters held in such low public and political regard, it's no wonder that they are being sent to jail (Miller), the subject of public humiliation (Rafter), and are otherwise laughingstocks for any given half of the country (Moore/Liddy, take your pick).

The problem with journalism, though, is not the corporations, the politicians, nor the viewing public that has made *The O'Reilly Factor* #1 on cable news, but rather the journalists themselves.

To quote Rolling Stone National Affairs contributor Matt Taibbi, "if journalists were doing their jobs right, we wouldn't need a blowhard [sic] like Michael Moore." And a world without Michael Moore would be a world without Sean Hannity, where Left and Right vanish and... oh, what a wonderful world. Trees of green, red roses too. And, maybe, a world where my husky can wear that hulking key chain with pride.

Until that day, when I think about to myself about journalism, I think I want to throw up.

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A memo to my earlier self

FROM: Stephen Burnett, as of 07.28.2005

TO: Stephen Burnett, as of 07.28.2001

SUBJECT: Use we'll the days



Stephen Burnett
KERNEL COLUMNIST

This is an insane concept, but I've rarely attempted to avoid those before. And it's no more strange than the crazed MIT students who last May — May of 2005 — held a "time traveler convention" in case someone from the future wanted to warp in to them with cures for cancer and cold fusion recipes.

Yet I do this in case someone from the future *does* develop time travel. In that event, this column can be transmitted four years back to the earlier version of me, in 2001, before I began college.

Thus I'll be able to teach myself, before I enter that life stage, all the things I know now.

First, concentrate on your journalism. Yes, computer science may seem best back then, but you will find out early on that such a field is truly not your forte. Instead, you really can write about things that others assign. Contact local publications and ask if they want freelance stories or columns; do anything possible to learn and gain even more experience.

It works. Take your writing seriously, because eventually others will. It's incredible.

Take the novel seriously also. It is not such an implausible concept. Do not give it up. At this point, at least one very important person has expressed definite interest. It can happen. And never be afraid to accept criticism, or even rewrite the whole manuscript if necessary.

Never stop listening to your parents. They'll always love you, even when you're acting especially flawed. Yes, they're wiser than you are. Don't forget that.

Watch out for Pretenders. They'll act like sheep, but inwardly they're ferocious wolves. I would name them here, if not for the fear that one or more of them might make it big in politics and end up sitting on the Federal Chronological Displacement Commissions board, and thus angrily block any transmission of this memo to the past. (And of course, naming them would make the initial publication problematic.)

Anticipate the Authentics. They are true friends given by God. Who knows what you really need and will provide them just in time! They'll actually care about you. They'll phone, instant-message or e-mail, just to say hi. They'll give you encouragement and constructive criticism. They'll give you something that was just what you needed that day, without even knowing at first how much you'd appreciate it. They'll share perspectives you'd never thought of before — and they'll reinforce your convictions.

They won't be along for a few years,

though. Just wait for them patiently.

And continue with the whole waiting-on-romance lifestyle too, although you may think no one else you know believes in it. You're only 18. Why even subconsciously shop if you can't buy? Be a friend to others, of course, yet keep it at that. You'll know when the time comes to move forward. God will make that clear.

Work ceaselessly. Study harder. Speak up in classes; try not to sound or act so tangential all the time. You'll be glad you did — and so will your teachers.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan and Iraq will be big. Invest in Starbucks and Google. "Blogs" will be popular.

And yes, Bush does win re-election.

Now I consider the repercussions if I had actually received this message in 2001.

Time would backfire on itself. Knowing all of my successes in advance, I would likely have not worked as hard. Knowing the things and people I should have avoided, I wouldn't have learned multiple lessons on discernment and Grace. And if I'd already known the friends I could trust, I would not have experienced the complete joy in getting to know them for the first time.

What life enjoyment would one have in being able to forecast everything? Would this ability enhance the appeal of opening a wrapped gift, listening to new music or viewing a new movie? Could predicting the success of a friendship make it any more joyful to meet someone new, swap stories, share common interests and learn more about another's life? Might it at all increase one's own character to do whatever possible to avoid failures and only do whatever results in success?

Not at all.

Therefore I suppose it's fitting that only the Lord God knows what will happen next. Moreover, I think I've partially learned why He likes to keep us in suspense sometimes — because reality itself confirms that suspense is often thrilling. Not knowing what's ahead in time. Not knowing what great things will happen next. Not knowing which way the thrill ride vehicle will plummet.

School was thrilling enough, and often terrifying. Writing articles and columns was a blast. Meeting true and authentic friends was perhaps best of all.

I thank God for all of them.

And here at the end, although I would have done some things differently, I'm reminded that He's in control. In His dramatic novel, I'm merely a supporting character who doesn't yet know what awaits in the next chapters.

Currently I'm in a slower portion of the narrative, but that's all right. And although He's entrusted me with even more co-author status recently, He's still the Master Author, and He knows the master plot.

And someday this story will be worth telling — as will the story of anyone who follows Him.

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